

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

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INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

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AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

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USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L NAIROBI 10193

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SOPN, RH, KE

SUBJ: SMITH TALKS ABOUT "SETTLEMENT" IN KENYA NEWSPAPER
INTERVIEW

REF: PRETORIA 3997

1. SUMMARY: IAN SMITH GRANTED EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW TO NAIROBI "SUNDAY NATION" FOREIGN EDITOR. INTERVIEW, WHICH WAS PROMINENTLY FEATURED AUGUST 8, BROKE LITTLE NEW GROUND BUT SMITH'S COMMENTS ENTIRELY COMPATIBLE WITH HIS POSITION AS OUTLINED REFTEL. FACT OF INTERVIEW AS WELL AS CONTENTS LEND SUPPORT TO VIEW SMITH IS HOPING TO OBTAIN SOME ACCEPTANCE FOR "INTERNAL SETTLEMENT" AMONG MODERATE AFRICAN STATES. EMBASSY DOES NOT BELIEVE GOK, DESPITE ITS MODERATION, WOULD BREAK RANS WITH OAU CONSENSUS AGAINST SUCH SETTLEMENT. END SUMMARY.

2. IN INTERVIEW SMITH DECLINED TO NAME "MODERATE AFRICAN
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LEADERS" WITH WHOM HE IS WILLING TO WORK FOR SETTLEMENT, STATING INSTEAD HE IS "PREPARED TO WORK WITH BLACK RHODESIANS WHO ARE OPPOSED TO TERRORISM AND WHO ARE PREPARED TO WROK PEACEFULLY AND CONSTITUTIONALLY FOR A SETTLEMENT. AND I THINK THAT INCORPORATES NEARLY ALL OF THE BLACK RHODESIANS WHO ARE IN OUR COUNTRY TODAY. IT EXCLUDES THE PATRIOTIC FRONT."

3. SMITH'S COMMENTS ON ANGLO-AMERICAN INITIATIVE APPEAR TO LEAVE "INTERNATIONAL TRACK" OPTION OPEN BUT ARE OTHERWISE NON-COMMITTAL.

4. SMITH OFFERED ELABORATE DEFENSE OF HIS OPPOSITION TO "ONE-MAN ONE-VOTE" PRINCIPLE, OF NEED FOR "QUALIFICATIONS WHICH WILL PROVE THAT YOU ARE GOING TO EXERCISE YOUR VOTE IN A RESPONSIBLE MANNER." SPECIFIC MENTION OF COUNTRIES WHERE LITERACY IS THE CRITERION MAY SUGGEST SMITH'S THINKING ON WHERE COMPROMISE MIGHT BE FOUND WITH SITHOLE-MUZOREWA GROUP ON THIS ISSUE. NEVERTHELESS, SMITH STATED ONLY THAT HE DOES NOT SUPPORT "IRRESPONSIBLE DEMOCRACY" (READ ONE-MAN ONE-VOTE) --NOT THAT HE WOULD REFUSE OUTRIGHT TO COUNTENANCE IT.

5. SMITH PREDICTED "CHAOS FOR RHODESIA" SHOULD THE RHODESIAN FRONT LOSE FORTHCOMING ELECTIONS.

6. IN LENGTHY ELABORATION OF HIS POSITION ON NATURE OF FUTURE GOVERNMENT, SMITH AGAIN REJECTED "BLACK MAJORITY RULE" AS RACIST CONCEPT WHICH "INDICATES THAT YOU ARE GOING TO ELIMINATE OTHER PEOPLE BECAUSE OF THEIR COLOR...WE HAVE SO MANY GOOD WHITE RHODESIANS WHO ARE IN MANY CASES BORN AND BRED IN THIS COUNTRY AND THEY HAVE AS MUCH RIGHT AS ANYBODY ELSE TO PARTICIPATE."

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7. RHODESIA WAS PAINTED AS PLACE WHERE BLACKS HAVE "VERY FEW LEGITIMATE GRIEVANCES," ARE "BETTER OFF" THAN BLACKS IN MOST OTHER AFRICAN COUNTRIES AND HAVE BETTER HEALTH AND EDUCATION FACILITIES. SMITH EMPHASIZED THAT ELECTORATE FROM WHOM HE IS SEEKING MANDATE CONSISTS OF BOTH BLACK AND WHITE VOTERS. WHILE ADMITTING SOME "RELICS OF DISCRIMINATION" EXIST, THESE ARE, HE CLAIMED, BEING ELIMINATED. MOST DISCRIMINATION, HE SAID, "IS IN FAVOR OF BLACK RHODESIANS."

8. IN APPARENT EFFORT TO STRIKE SYMPATHETIC CHORD WITH FORMER BRITISH COLONIES IN AFRICA, SMITH REPEATEDLY BLAMED BRITISH FOR RACIAL PROBLEMS IN RHODESIA. "THESE THINGS ARE NOT THINGS THAT WERE BROUGHT TO BEING BY MY GOVERNMENT. THEY ARE THINGS WHICH WE INHERITED." SMITH SAID THAT "BLACK PEOPLE TO THE NORTH" HAVE TOLD HIM "THAT IN THEIR COUNTRIES THEY HAD THE SAME PROBLEMS AND THAT THE BRITISH WERE RESPONSIBLE."

9. SMITH SAID HE ADMIRES SOME BLACK AFRICAN LEADERS, BUT REFUSED TO NAME THEM, SAYING "IT IS MY DUTY TO TRY TO AVOID BEING PROVOCATIVE AS FAR AS THE LEADERS OF OTHER COUNTRIES IN THE WORLD ARE CONCERNED. WHETHER I ADMIRE THEM OR NOT

I HAVE TO LIVE WITH THEM WHERE I WORK WITH THEM AND AM PREPARED
TO WORK WITH ALL THE LEADERS OF THESE COUNTRIES EVEN THOUGH
I MIGHT DISAGREE WITH THEM AND MIGHT NOT NECESSARILY ADMIRE
THEM."

10. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH SMITH'S INTERVIEW WAS NOT GREETED
WITH JEERING EDITORIALS, KENYA GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC
OPINION REMAIN STRONGLY AGAINST INTERNAL SETTLEMENT SHORT
OF COMPLETE ACCEPTANCE BY SMITH OF ONE-MAN ONE-VOTE POLITICAL
SYSTEM. GOK IS UNLIKELY TO GET AHEAD OF THE OAU PACK IN
ACQUIESCING IN SMITH'S DESIGN.

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